

Oral Interview Index

Sacramento Ethnic Communities Survey

Group: PORTUGUESE

Subject: Monsignor Valdemiro Machado Fagundes

Interviewer: Joseph D'Alessandro

SIDE 2

:00 Introduction

Parents, Candido Machado Fagundes and Genevova Mendes. Father came and worked on dairies in Los Banos and Gustine. He returned to the Azores where he met and married Genevova Mendes. Father obtained citizenship in 1958 and had difficulty bringing his wife to the U.S.

3:00 Greatest day in Candido's life was when he obtained U.S. Citizenship. Discusses his family, 2 sisters and 2 brothers. Sisters in New England and brothers in California.

8:00 Talks about going into the priesthood. Parents discouraged it. Maternal grandmother talked parents into permitting it. Father refused to pay tuition so grandmother paid it for first year until father finally agreed to help. Val worked in the summer to help pay his expenses.

9:50 He knew that he didn't want to be a priest in the Azores, either become one in Macao or the United States. Made arrangements to come here.

11:31 he helped to raise money for Azorean earthquake victims

11:53 his father wrote him a letter right before his ordination telling him that it was not too late for him to back out

12:15 discusses relationship between church and people in the Azores. Holy Spirit Festas and symbols, like the Holy Spirit Crown, has immense power among the people and the church had tried to discourage it

14:25 Fagundes feel that the Festa in the United States is very important in keeping the faith alive among the Azorean Americans. Festas brought people to church to maintain their faith and culture. Festas kept Portuguese communities in contact.

17:19 Fagundes would travel to many Festas, because of lack of Portuguese priests, to hear confessions and say Mass.

17:50 Compares the Holy Spirit Festas and the Our Lady of Fatima Festas. Calls people to god. Fatima Festa is more serious. Sometimes processions become parades with the Holy Spirit Festas but not with the Fatima Festas. Tradition is to share with those who have little.

19:15 Our Lady of Fatima, who appeared in Portugal in 1917, became very popular

21:10 Discusses differences between Holy Spirit Festas in California and in the Azores. In Azores, queen didn't mean as much as here. Bullfights in Azores. He it became "show and tell". More devoted in the Azores.

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(cont.)

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- 25:20 Discusses how Azoreans felt when they came to the United States. They felt discrimination. Many wanted to make money here and then return to the Azores where they felt comfortable.
- 27:01 Often the children of those who returned to the Azores ended up back in the United States. Often financial ties here did not permit them to return to the Azores as they wanted.
- 28:15 At first when they came here they had little money and often lived on what they raised but they later became adjusted.
- 29:00 Discrimination was felt especially because of the language. Many, especially in New England, thought all Portuguese were Black because of larger Cape Verdean population.

SIDE 3

- :00 Discusses language. Second generation didn't want to speak Portuguese because they felt discrimination at school. They were often embarrassed because of their parent's inability to speak English.
- 1:20 Some try to hide their ethnicity. Not as much today as before.
- 1:56 New immigrants speak Portuguese more because of more pride.
- 2:30 Discusses role of Portuguese organization in community. More of the old insurance organizations are becoming aware of their cultural duties, especially Luso-American and UPEC.
- 4:41 In Sacramento some organizations retain only old members while others are very successful in trying to find new members, like the SES in Elk Grove which is becoming very big.
- 7:00 The Sacramento Portuguese community has been able to maintain itself. There aren't as many places of employment for laborers but new immigrants have helped bolster the community. Community needs more unification. Historical & Cultural Society have helped.
- 9:17 Statewide, the Sacramento Portuguese community is look upon as important. There are more educated and professional Portuguese.
- 10:40 The future for the Sacramento Portuguese community is bright.
- 12:35 He is sponsoring an Azorean Seminarian to replace him at St. Elizabeth's because he feel there is an important future here.